

**June 2005 - Early Action Compact Progress Report
Richland County**



1. In an effort to keep our contact information updated; please provide the following information for your county:

	Name	Telephone	E-mail Address
Administrator/Manager	T. Cary McSwain, Administrator	(803) 576-5053	carymcswain@richlandonline.com
EAC contact	Joe Cronin, Research Analyst	(803) 576-2066	joe Cronin@richlandonline.com

2. Please complete the attached Ozone Awareness Week checklist so that we will know which activities you did to promote awareness.

See attached

3. List any progress (if applicable) since your December 2004 submittal? (stakeholder meetings, events held; special projects, fleet Changes, Energy Star products purchased, Tree City USA, TABFTE, etc.)

Richland County aggressively promoted Ozone Awareness Week, both internally (including mass emails and an article in the employee newsletter), as well as to the public (through the issuance of press releases and newspaper articles about the county's commitment to the EAP.) The timing of Ozone Awareness Week also coincided with the unveiling of the county's newly re-designed website. While many citizens were logging on to check out the county's new website, they were greeted by links to a press release about Ozone Awareness Week, the county's early action plan, and most recently, a link to the daily ozone forecast. Staff also sent a countywide email on April 25th announcing a promotion at four Columbia-area Pitt Stop locations offering E85 for 0.85 per gallon on April 27, 2005.

4. Do you have any plans to implement additional strategies and/or education and outreach activities during the 2005 ozone season? (It's not too late to use Ozone Awareness Week ideas!)

In an effort to promote awareness of alternative fuels and to draw attention to the county's growing fleet of flexible fuel vehicles, the Office of Public Information will soon be designing a sticker or magnet that can be placed on each of the county's FFV's. Originally, staff discussed the idea of purchasing materials from the National Ethanol Vehicle Coalition, but decided instead to create such items "in-house" in an effort to customize the design with Richland County's name and logo. Pending final approval, the County has budgeted funds to purchase approximately 24 flexible fuel vehicles and three hybrid vehicles in 2005-06. These purchases will allow the county to maintain its pace toward meeting a goal of having a fleet with 30% alternative fuel vehicles by 2010. On June 6, 2005, a Clean Air Report briefing was held for members of Richland County and Columbia City Council at the county administration building. Finally, Richland County employees will continue to receive information from the ozone coordinator alerting them of Ozone Action Days and other information pertinent to improving air quality in Richland County.

5. Do you have any requests for specific assistance from the Department and/or the EPA?

Supervisor/Manager/Administrator: T. Cary McSwain

Date: June 6, 2005

EAC Contact: Joe Cronin

Date: June 6, 2005

Richland County
What did you do?
Ozone Awareness Week 2005

Prior to Ozone Awareness Week (March 28th- April 1st), we provided the following outreach materials. Please check the initiatives that you did and explain to what extent you did them. If you did more, please include those items at the bottom. Also, if you have plans to use any of these materials during the 2005 ozone season, please include that information as well. Thanks for all of your hard work in making the 2005 Ozone Awareness Week a success!

√Posters (3 different)

Explain: DHEC's "Good Up High, Bad Nearby" poster was on display at the Richland County Administration Building.

√Ozone and Your Health brochure

Explain: This brochure appears on the Richland County ozone website (<http://www.rcgov.us/information/ozone/dhecbrochure.pdf>).

√Display?

Explain: Extra bookmarks were displayed in windows and doorways as well as on bulletin boards in well-traveled areas of the county administration building (ie. Employee kitchen.)

√Season bookmarks in employee paychecks

Explain: Ozone bookmarks are available for download on the Richland County Ozone website (<http://www.rcgov.us/information/ozone/spareair.pdf>)

√*"Do Your Part to Spare the Air"* blue bookmarks in employee paychecks

Explain: "Do Your Part to Spare the Air" brochures were not placed in paychecks, but they were distributed to many employees, as well as placed in windows and on bulletin boards.

√Link to ozone forecast available on county web site

Explain: Beginning earlier this May, a link to DHEC's daily ozone forecast was made available on the county's website. The link is located on the main page, directly below current weather conditions, and is one of the first things that visitors to the website see. (www.rcgov.us) The county also maintains a separate section on the website detailing the Early Action Plan and tips to reduce harmful emissions (<http://www.rcgov.us/information/ozone/home.asp>)

□ Coloring book

Explain: _____

√"DRAFT" Press Release

Explain: The county ozone coordinator used the draft press release as a guide in customizing a press release specific to Richland County. The press release was distributed by the Richland County Office of Public Information to approximately 50 media contacts throughout the region, as well as placed on the county website. The release was picked up by *The State* newspaper in "County Recognizes Ozone Awareness Week," as well as the *Free Times*, which recently published a story highlighting the County's growing fleet of flexible fuel vehicles.

√Proclamation from Governor to be distributed

Explain: The proclamation from Governor Sanford was distributed to all county employees as an attachment via e-mail.

√List of 25 things you can do to spare the air... flyer

Explain: The list of 25 things you can do to spare the air flyer was distributed to all county employees as an attachment via e-mail, and is also available on the county's website.

√Copy of e-mail to distribute to employees

Explain: An announcement was made via e-mail to all county employees informing them of Ozone Awareness Week, and included the attachments mentioned above.

Extras:

In addition to coverage in both *The State* and *Free Times*, an article highlighting Ozone Awareness Week was placed in the employee newsletter and was delivered to all county employees.

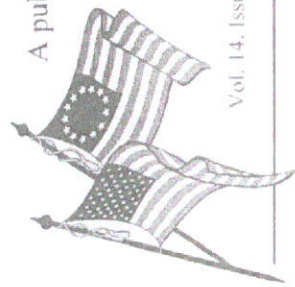
Attachments:

- 1) "Ozone Awareness Impacts Your Health" *Richland Reporter (Employee Newsletter)*
- 2) "County Recognizes Ozone Awareness Week" *The State*
- 3) "Air Pollution Chokes Richland: County Moved to Reduce Emissions, Ground Ozone" *The Free Times*
- 4) Countywide e-mail announcing a promotion at four Columbia-area Pitt Stop locations offering E85 for 0.85 per gallon on April 27, 2005.

(p. 7)
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Richland Reporter

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ZONE Awareness Impacts Your Health

Did you know??????????????

According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA):

Even at very low levels, ground-level ozone triggers a variety of health problems, including aggravated asthma, reduced lung capacity, and increased susceptibility to respiratory illnesses like pneumonia and bronchitis.

Ground-level ozone interferes with the ability of plants to produce and store food, which makes them more susceptible to disease, insects, other pollutants, and harsh weather.

A conventional lawn mower can pollute as much in an hour as 40 late model cars.

Governor Mark Sanford has proclaimed March 28th through April 1st, as **Ozone Awareness Week** in the State of South Carolina. The goal of Ozone Awareness Week is to increase awareness about the causes and harmful effects of ground-level ozone in our state. The ground-level ozone season begins Friday, April 1st, in South Carolina, and runs through the end of October. As the weather gets hotter during these months, increased concentrations of ground-level ozone becomes a greater public health concern.

As one of the largest employers in the area, Richland County recognizes its position to be a leader in protecting our environmental resources. We are committed to doing our part to improve air quality in the midlands region, and promoting Richland County as a cleaner, healthier place to live and work.

Here are just a few examples of the emission reduction strategies that Richland County has planned for 2005:

- The County is currently pursuing a grant to help offset the cost of installing E85 infrastructure to service the County's growing fleet of cleaner burning flexible fuel vehicles (FFV's).
- Due to the success of last year's two gas can exchange events, a third exchange is planned for later this year.
- Lawn mowing will continue to be limited on county property during ozone action days.
- The Richland County Ozone Coordinator will keep citizens and employees informed of upcoming ozone action days, and will offer tips about simple changes that you can make in your daily schedule to promote cleaner air in Richland County.

Joe Cronin
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The **Richland Reporter** is published by the Richland County Office of Public Information
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The State

RICHLAND COUNTY

County recognizes Ozone Awareness Week

Ozone Awareness Week, is March 28 through April 1.

As the weather warms, the concentration of ground-level ozone becomes a bigger issue, usually beginning in May.

In recognition of the week, Richland County is working on a grant proposal to pay for an 8,000gallon double-walled alternative fuel tank. The tank will service the county's growing fleet of cleaner burning flexible fuel vehicles.

Also, an ozone forecast will be placed on the county's redesigned Web site, www.richlandonline.com.



Richland County's fleet manager, Bill Peters, in one of the county's Ford Explorers that burn alternative fuels. Photo by Wendy Pagonis

Air Pollution Chokes Richland

County Moves to Reduce Emissions, Ground Ozone

By WENDY PAGONIS

Bill Peters slides into the cloth, bucket seat placing his hand on the steering wheel. It's a recent warm afternoon and sunshine is hammering the windshield of the new Ford Explorer. Peters doesn't mind, though. He holds the bragging rights to Richland County's growing fleet of alternative-fuel vehicles and he wants to exercise those rights today.

"It's the wave of the future," says Peters, the county's fleet manager.

The Ford Explorer that Peters occupies is one of about two dozen alternative- or flexible-fuel vehicles the county has purchased in recent years. It is part of the administration's plan to curb air pollution, a plan necessary to avoid additional federal regulation.

Put simply, the air in Richland County is too dirty for the Environmental Protection Agency to ignore. To fix the problem and comply with the Clean Air Act, the county is working with the S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control.

If Richland doesn't clean up its air, the EPA will designate it as a "non-attainment area." The designation would limit the county's freedom to recruit businesses and could force the county to regulate emissions using mandatory vehicle inspections. But that's a big if. The county has until 2007 to get air pollution within its borders below federal limits.

It happens that part of the plan brings about 100 alternative-fuel vehicles to the county at a time when gasoline prices are roiling consumers at the pumps.

"Right now, ethanol is a little cheaper," Peters says. The average price is \$1.95 per gallon, he says. The county gets an even lower price than that because it qualifies for the rate given to distributors. And the cost could decline further if Peters gets the OK to build

an 8,000-gallon ethanol tank at the county's Public Works building.

It's not just the county using alternative-fuel vehicles. In the past year, the number of stations in the area that sell ethanol fuel, commonly known as E-85, has increased from the Exxon at Gervais and Bull streets to six stations in Richland and Lexington counties combined.

In addition to the county, some residents who had purchased flex-fuel vehicles are now taking advantage of the alternative to higher-priced gasoline. Cars like the Ford Taurus have been built for alternative fuels for years, but many owners continued to use straight gasoline. The advantage to using ethanol, besides that it produces less pollution, is that it burns at a higher octane, helping engines operate more efficiently.

Flex-fuel vehicles are sporty, efficient and easy to maintain, but they will not be enough to eliminate Richland's air pollution problem entirely.

The county signed on partners to help. Among them is an International Paper plant in Eastover. The company promised in August to reduce nitrogen oxide emissions from the plant by at least 1,000 tons.

According to the American Lung Association, air pollution is a bigger threat to people's health than ever before realized. O₃, commonly known as ozone gas, is found naturally in the upper atmosphere, but pollution mixed with heat creates ozone at ground level. Studies show it causes breathing difficulties among people with asthma, emphysema and other chronic lung problems.

"The studies also found that ozone causes shortness of breath and coughing, triggers asthma attacks and increases the need for emergency room visits and hospital admissions," the association says in its "State of The Air: 2005" report released April 28.

Richland County's air pollution problems are measured by how frequently an air monitor in Lower Richland has recorded excessive ozone levels. Another air monitor in Lower Richland showed no excessive pollution.

The county administration wants good news from both monitors and hopes the effort in Peters' department will help bring it about. ■

Let us know what you think.
Email wendyp@free-times.com or
news@free-times.com.

Joe Cronin

From: ROXANNE MATTHEWS
Sent: Monday, April 25, 2005 10:01 AM
To: [All Richland County Employees](#)
Subject: E85 for 85 Cents at four Pitt Stop Locations

**Come and get your E85 FUEL
for 85¢/gallon***

Available at four Pitt Stop locations:

**2022 Bluff Road in Columbia
7409 Broad River Road in Irmo
5019 Augusta Road in Lexington
595 Spears Creek Church Road in Elgin**

**Wednesday,
April 27, 2005 from
Noon until 4:00 p.m.**

You could be one of thousands in South Carolina driving a flexible-fuel vehicle capable of fueling on E85, a cleaner-burning alternative to gasoline.

Four Pitt Stop locations in the Columbia area will sell *E85 for 85 cents* on **April 27, 2005** for Flexible Fuel Vehicles.

E85 is a cleaner, high-octane, and renewable transportation fuel. Fuel we can grow in South Carolina!

It's easy to use E85! Look under your car's fuel door for a decal indicating E85 use.

4/26/2005

Who currently uses E85 in South Carolina?

- . South Carolina State Fleet
- . SC Department of Health and
Environmental Control
- . Savannah River Site
- . Santee Cooper

*To learn more about E85, visit www.E85Fuel.com or contact the National Ethanol Vehicle Coalition at (877) 485-8595. To find out more about alternative fuels in South Carolina, please visit the Palmetto State Clean Fuels Coalition website at www.palmettocleanfuels.org.

This promotion is open to individuals and fleets. Pitt Stop accepts all major credit cards including MC, VISA, AMEX, Discover, Wright Express, Voyager, and PH&H.